

Attorney's Docket No.: 06816-073003

Amendment to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

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1-2. (cancelled)

3. (currently amended) A method of forming a membrane electrode assembly, comprising:

obtaining a solid-electrolyte membrane;

first, treating the membrane using a ~~conditioning~~ pre-treating agent which reduces wrinkling of the membrane when catalyst is applied;

after said treating, applying a catalyst ink which includes platinum directly onto a first surface of said treated membrane;

second applying a second catalyst ink which includes platinum directly onto a second surface of said treated membrane;

first placing a first support substrate on said first surface of said membrane;

second placing a second support substrate on said second surface of said membrane; and

bonding said first support substrate, said membrane, and said second substrate forming a membrane electrode assembly.

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4. (original) A method as in claim 3, wherein said first applying is pouring said first catalyst ink onto said membrane.

5. (original) A method as in claim 3, wherein said second applying is pouring said second catalyst ink onto said membrane.

6. (previously presented) A method as in claim 4, wherein said first catalyst ink is formed from a mixture having about 7-10% catalyst, about 60-70% of a solution of co-polymer of TFE and fluorosuphonyl monomer, 15-20% of PTFE that is diluted to 11% in solids, and a viscosity adjusted for pouring.

7. (previously presented) A method as in claim 5, wherein said second catalyst ink is formed from a mixture having about 7-10% catalyst, about 60-70% of a solution of co-polymer of TFE and fluorosuphonyl monomer, 15-20% of PTFE that is diluted to 11% in solids, and a viscosity adjusted for pouring.

8. (original) A method as in claim 3, wherein said first support substrate is carbon paper.

9. (original) A method as in claim 3, wherein said second support substrate is carbon paper.

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10. (original) A method as in claim 3, wherein said first applying is spraying said first catalyst ink onto said membrane.

11. (original) A method as in claim 3, wherein said second applying is spraying said second catalyst ink onto said membrane.

12. (previously presented) A method as in claim 10, wherein said first catalyst ink is formed from a mixture having about 7-10% catalyst, about 60-70% of a solution of TFE and fluorosuphonyl monomer, 15-20% of PTFE that is diluted to 11% in solids, and a viscosity adjusted for spraying.

13. (previously presented) A method as in claim 11, wherein said second catalyst ink is formed from a mixture having about 7-10% catalyst, about 60-70% of a solution of TFE and fluorosuphonyl monomer, 15-20% of PTFE that is diluted to 11% in solids, and a viscosity adjusted for spraying.

14. (previously presented) A method as in claim 3, wherein said treating comprises soaking the membrane in a combination of water and an aliphatic alcohol.

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15. (currently amended) A method as in claim 14, wherein said ~~swelling~~ pre-treating agent comprises solutions between 10% and 90% of isopropanol in water.

16. (previously presented) A method as in claim 3, wherein said first and second applying comprises applying catalyst at a level of 2 to 3 mg per centimeter squared.

17. (currently amended) A method comprising:
forming a membrane of a material which would wrinkle during specified processing;

pretreating the membrane in a way to reduce wrinkling of the membrane during subsequent processing;

after said pretreating,

applying a catalyst which includes platinum, directly to the membrane after said treating; and

binding the membrane with platinum attached, to another material.

18. (previously presented) A method as in claim 17, further comprising:

after said applying a catalyst, drying surfaces of said membrane using a controlled evaporation.

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19. (previously presented) A method as in claim 18, wherein said controlled evaporation comprises controlling an amount of liquid which can evaporate in a specified time.

20. (previously presented) A method as in claim 17, wherein said pretreating comprises soaking in a solution of 50% alcohol for 24 hours.